



**International Telecommunication Union**  
**REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA**

Ref.: ROA/ADD/AR/ma/L040/20

Addis Ababa, 26 August 2020

- Administrations of ITU Member States
- Regulators
- ITU Sector Members,
- Academia
- ITU Academy Centres of Excellence in Africa
- ITU Digital Transformation Centres in Africa
- Regional/International Organizations in Africa
- Regional representation of UN System Organizations in Africa, including the regional UN Development Coordination Office (DCO)
- Regional Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Advisory Groups (TSAG, TDAG, RAG) and Study Groups

Cc:

- Permanent Missions for African countries

**Subject: ITU Regional Development Forum for Africa (RDF-AFR), 6-7 October 2020 (12:00-15:00 CAT) (virtual meeting) with preparatory break-out sessions on 5 October 2020 (12:00-15:00 CAT)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to invite you to participate in the 2020 Regional Development Forum for Africa (RDF-AFR) to be organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), with the support of the Ministry of Transport and Communication of Zambia and the national ICT regulatory body ZICTA which will be held virtually on 6 and 7 October 2020, together with break-out preparatory sessions on 5 October. Under the theme of “**Digital transformation to accelerate achievement of the SDGs – Digital development, partnerships and funding**”, the RDF will focus on digital development activities, projects and initiatives, and opportunities.

The Regional Development Forum provides an opportunity for dialogue between Regional Offices and decision-makers of ITU Member States and Sector Members, Regional and International Organizations, and other stakeholders who wish to strengthen cooperation and partnerships for activities carried out at the regional level. The 2020 Regional Development Forum for Africa will involve stocktaking and discussions on where the region is in terms of implementation of the 2018-2021 ITU Regional Initiatives approved by the 2017 World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-17), and also assess strategic orientations that may impact on ITU’s work plan in the region going forward. In this context, RDF-AFR will discuss and report on the implementation of activities and projects under the Buenos Aires Action Plan, and especially as this concerns the work items under the five Regional Initiatives for Africa. With a view to encourage a participatory and inclusive process of meeting the agreed development goals and adjusting as appropriate the approaches to meet them, the RDF provides all stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss progress made, ongoing work and plans for implementation, to announce commitments, and to exchange experiences and good practices.

The RDF will also include insights from the regional UN Development Coordination Office (DCO), UN Resident Coordinators, and UN Country Team representatives to allow for a platform of exchange and sharing of experiences on the cross-cutting role of digital technologies for achieving a transformed and prosperous Africa, through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

The RDF will showcase development efforts in the region and inspire the next steps in implementing activities, projects, study Questions and other Regional Initiatives in Africa. All stakeholders who are currently involved in the implementation of development projects, or have promising ideas for the future, are invited to submit their written input and proposals in the form of contributions by **15 September 2020** to [itu-ro-africa@itu.int](mailto:itu-ro-africa@itu.int). The submissions will be presented during the meeting and its break-out sessions and will serve as a basis to discuss the next steps for activities and projects to be implemented in Q4 2020, in 2021, and beyond. The template for contributions is attached to this letter and is available for download on the RDF website (<http://itu.int/go/RDF-AFR2020>).

The RDF will be conducted in English and French, with simultaneous interpretation. All information related to the event, including agenda, presentations, contributions and practical information with guidance on how to connect to the online platform will be available on the RDF website at: <http://itu.int/go/RDF-AFR2020>

The draft agenda is attached as Annex 1, and Annex 2 provides the template for contributions.

To participate, please register online using the link available at: <http://www.itu.int/go/regitud> no later than **1 October 2020**. When registering, you are kindly asked to indicate which break-out session(s) you would like to participate in.

Ms Chali Tumelo, ITU Area Representative for Southern Africa and Ms Christine Sund, Senior Advisor, ITU Regional Office for Africa (Tel.: +251 11 551 4977, E-mail: [chali.tumelo@itu.int](mailto:chali.tumelo@itu.int); [christine.sund@itu.int](mailto:christine.sund@itu.int); [itu-ro-africa@itu.int](mailto:itu-ro-africa@itu.int)), are at your full disposal for any questions you might have concerning this event.

Yours faithfully,

*[original signed]*

Andrew Rugege

Regional Director for Africa and  
Liaison to ECA and AU

Annexes: 2

## ANNEX 1

## 2020 Regional Development Forum for Africa (RDF-AFR)

**Digital transformation to accelerate achievement of the SDGs  
– Digital development, partnerships and funding**

6-7 October 2020 (12:00 – 15:00 CAT time) (*Virtual meeting*)  
with preparatory break-out sessions on 5 October 2020 (12:00 – 15:00 CAT time)

## Draft agenda

The 2020 Regional Development Forum for Africa (RDF-AFR), under the theme of *Digital transformation to accelerate achievement of the SDGs – Digital development, partnerships and funding*, will focus on digital development activities, projects, and Regional Initiatives in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the innovative partnerships that are required to launch and implement them, and ensure that they are sustainable. While progress is being made in many places, overall, action to meet the SDGs and related national target is not advancing at the speed or scale required. A decade of ambitious action is required to deliver on the Goals by 2030. In line with the Sixth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development held in February 2020, the Decade of Action calls for accelerating sustainable solutions to all the world's biggest challenges, where technologies and digital solutions play a critical role. This further requires and calls for sustainable and ICT-accelerated development in the region with impact, focusing on the five critical dimensions of People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership, guided by all 17 SDGs and not leaving anybody behind. It is to this backdrop that RDF-AFR is held.

Tuesday, 6 October 2020

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**12:00 – 15:00 Addis Ababa time CAT (GMT+3)**

**Digital transformation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Digital development, partnerships, and funding**

**12:00 – 12:25 OPENING AND WELCOMING REMARKS**

- Welcoming addresses
- Setting the scene: The RDF as a platform for collaboration on ICT/SDG related project implementation in Africa

**12:25 – 13:40 VIRTUAL ROUND TABLE ONE: Results and impact oriented regional actions from WTDC-17 and toward WTDC-21**

Thematic priorities | Results Based Management Approach | ITU Actions at the Regional Level | ITU as Part of Regional United Nations Sustainable Development System | Regional Initiatives | Study Groups | Partnerships | Resource Mobilization | Membership | WSIS Action Lines and SDGs

**13:40 – 14:45 VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE TWO: Implementation, collaboration and funding - Regional projects, initiatives, and partnerships contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, WSIS Action Lines and regional priorities**

In focus ITU development thematic priorities: **Networks and digital infrastructure, Cybersecurity, Emergency telecommunications, Environment, Digital policy and regulation**, together with the related regional initiatives.

Fire-starter

- **AFR Regional initiative 2** – Promotion of emerging broadband technologies
- **AFR Regional initiative 3** – Building trust and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technology
- **AFR Regional initiative 5** – Management and monitoring of the radio-frequency spectrum and transition to digital broadcasting

Strategic Partnerships | New Projects | Resource Mobilization | Broadband Infrastructure Mapping | PRIDA | Cybersecurity | Giga – School Connectivity

**14:45 – 15:00 WRAP UP OF DAY 1**

Wednesday, 7 October 2020

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12:00 – 15:00 Addis Ababa time CAT (GMT+3)

12:00 – 12:05 OPENING OF DAY 2

12:05 – 13:30 VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE THREE: Implementation, collaboration and funding - - Projects, initiatives, and partnerships contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, WSIS Action Lines and regional priorities

In focus ITU development thematic priorities: **Capacity development, Digital services and applications, Digital inclusion, Digital innovation ecosystems, Statistics and data for evidence-based decision making** together with the related regional initiatives.

Fire-starter

- **AFR Regional initiative 1** – Building digital economies and fostering innovation in Africa
- **AFR Regional initiative 4** – Strengthening human and institutional capacity building

Strategic Partnerships | New Projects | Resource Mobilization | Smart Villages | Decent Jobs and Digital Skills |

Digital Financial Inclusion | Digital Innovation and Ecosystem Building |  
Digital Empowerment and African Girls Can Code

13:30 – 14:45 VIRTUAL REVIEW: Next steps for digital development, partnerships and funding

14:45 – 15:00 CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

**ANNEX 2**

Template for the submission of contributions to RDF-AFR 2020.

All stakeholders who are involved in the implementation of development projects, or have promising ideas for the future, are invited to submit their written input and proposals in the form of contributions by **15 September 2020** to [itu-ro-africa@itu.int](mailto:itu-ro-africa@itu.int).